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ABSTRACT

The manual contains three instruments (including instructions and sample materials) used in the Bringing Out Head Start Talents (BOHST) project to identify children with potential talent in one or more of the following six areas: intellectual, creative, leadership, visual and performing arts, academic, psychomotor. A teacher checklist and parent checklist each contain a set of four abilities or behaviors indicative of talent in each of nine areas. Checklist ratings are recorded on the third instrument, the Talent Identification Summary. A final section in the manual outlines the talent staffing process wherein a team of professionals, including the classroom teacher and perhaps the child's parents, review and finalize identification of those children who are to receive talent programming. (JW)

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Talent Identification

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EC 191 368

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INTRODUCTION

Talent identification is the second major step in the BOHST process. Once all of the children have received the general programming (detective, inventor, and judge thinking activities) you are ready to begin looking for the children who demonstrate talent in one or more of the following six talent areas:

intellectual	visual & performing arts (art and music)
creative	academic (math, science, and reading)
leadership	psychomotor

Identifying children with talents or gifts is difficult at any age, especially at the preschool level before children have often had the experience necessary to fully develop and demonstrate their talents. The project uses information from the people who know the children best--their parents and teachers--to assess children's skills as accurately as possible. It is impossible to determine with certainty which children will grow up to be among the 3-5% of gifted adults in our population. However, "by using a wide net approach" and carefully selecting 10-20% of the children who show potential talent, we can help insure that children's strengths are developed during their critical years.

This manual includes all the materials needed to complete the BOHST identification process. Each section contains instructions and sample materials which may be photocopied for use in the identification process. The three instruments used for selecting children with potential talent are as follows:

1. Teacher Checklist
2. Parent Checklist
3. Talent Identification Summary

Both the parent and teacher checklists contain a set of four abilities or behaviors indicative of talent in each area. The teacher rates each child in his or her classroom on the items tested. Parents fill out a checklist for their own child. Ratings from both of these checklists are recorded on the Talent Identification Summary.

A final determination of which children are identified is made at a special meeting called the Talent Staffing. The teacher, aide, BOHST trainer, and possibly the child's parents meet to review the information recorded on the Talent Identification Summary. The children selected as having potential talent in one or more areas will then continue to the third step of the BOHST process, Talent Programming. Talent Programming involves nurturing the talents of the identified children through special small group activities and an individualized educational plan.

Through careful implementation of this process, you can help insure that no child's abilities are underated or overlooked.

TEACHER CHECKLIST

TEACHER CHECKLIST

This instrument is designed to screen for children who have potential areas of talent or giftedness.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Write the names of the children being screened, from youngest to oldest, in the spaces provided on each page.

2. Read carefully the lettered items under each talent area heading.

3. Observe the children, keeping these talent items in mind.
   (You may want to read and observe only 3 or 4 talent areas at one time.)

4. Rate each child on the frequency of the listed behaviors by using the following scale and record it on the checklist:

   1. Rarely

   2. Sometimes

   3. Often

   4. Almost always

It is recommended that you rate all children in one talent area before proceeding to a second talent area. For example; rate child A on the four items under intellectual, then rate child B on those same items, then child C, etc. When all children are rated on the items under intellectual, repeat the process for each of the other talent areas.

If you are unable to observe some items within a talent area use an additional day to observe and/or to offer opportunities which may elicit the desired behaviors.

Think of each child as an individual. Try to avoid comparisons between children.

5. Record each talent area score from the checklist onto the Talent Identification Summary within the appropriate talent area below the child's name. Be sure to record the scores in the column designated "T" for Teacher Checklist.

Screening for Talented Children
Teacher Checklist

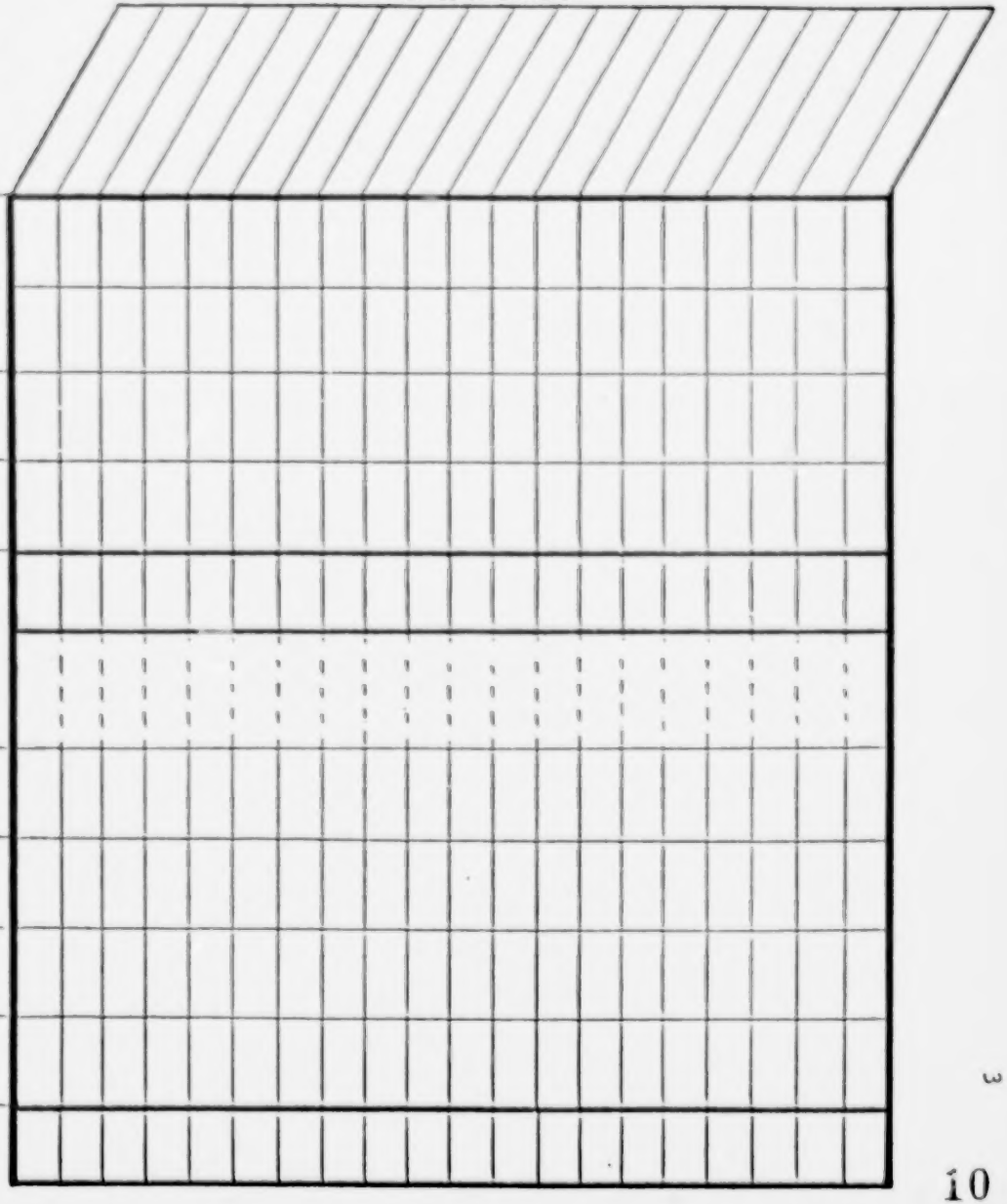
CODE
1. Rarely
2. Sometimes
3. Often
4. Almost Always

Teacher _____

School _____

Date _____

Names of Children



INTELLECTUAL

1. Communicates and expresses ideas very well.
2. Is able to understand abstract or implied relationships (e.g., usually gets more out of a story, film, conversation, etc., than others his or her age).
3. Is very good at solving problems and at applying what he or she has learned to everyday situations.
4. Learns easily and quickly with good memory skills; tends to know about things of which other children are unaware.

subtotal

CREATIVE

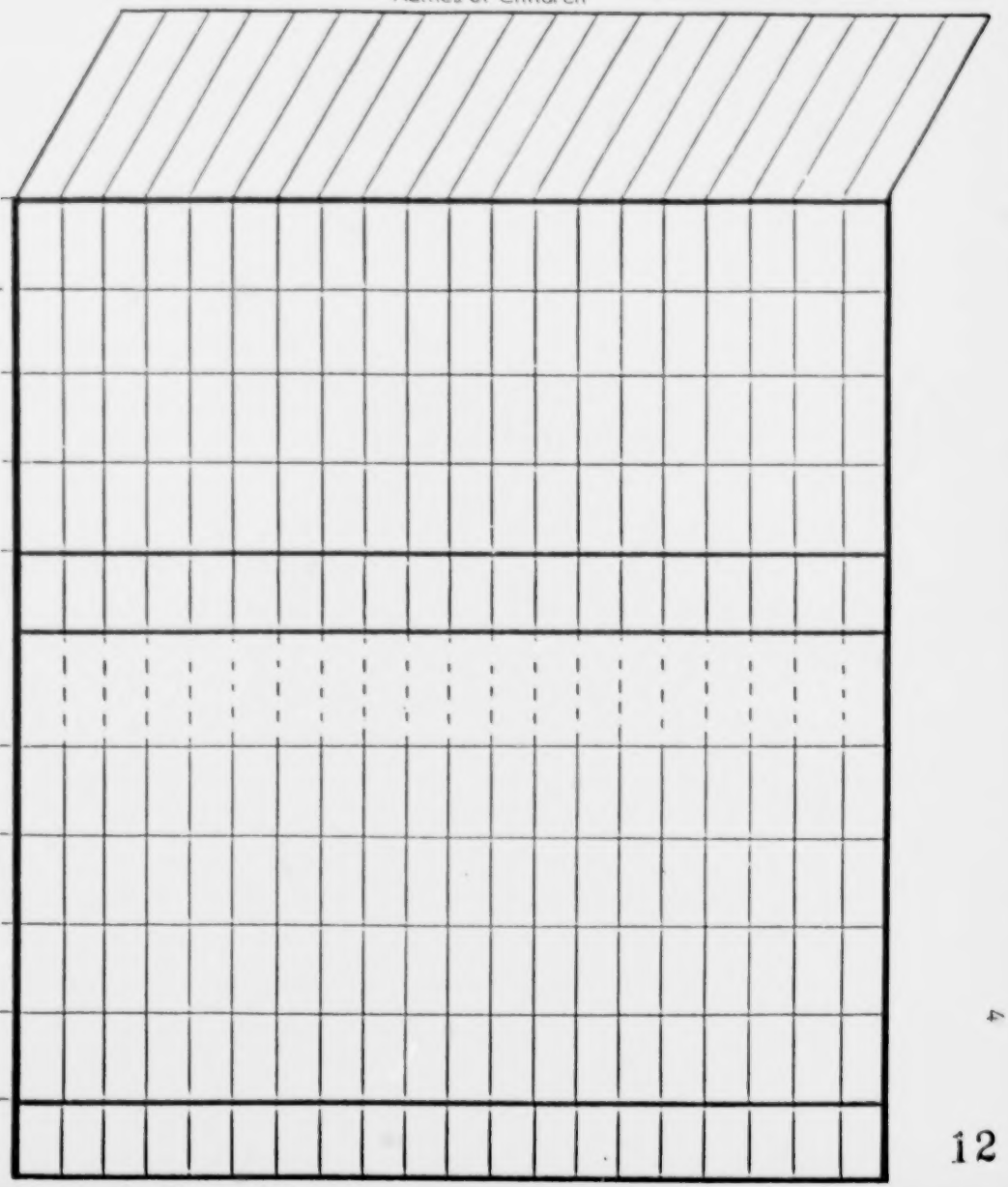
1. Often has many ideas or solutions to problems for a given situation.
2. Elaborates or adds detail to art work, or conversation.
3. Is highly imaginative in art work, play, use of materials, or ideas; and often gives unusual responses.
4. Is flexible (i.e., able to approach a problem or use materials in more than one way).

subtotal

Screening for Talented Children
Teacher Checklist

CODE
1. Rarely
2. Sometimes
3. Often
4. Almost Always

Names of Children



LEADERSHIP

1. Adjusts quickly to new situations and interacts easily with other children and adults.
2. Tends to direct activities in which she or he is involved and assumes responsibility beyond what is expected for his or her age.
3. Is often chosen or sought out by other children as a playmate.
4. Shows a unique awareness of the needs of others (e.g., other children often come to him or her for help.)

subtotal

ART

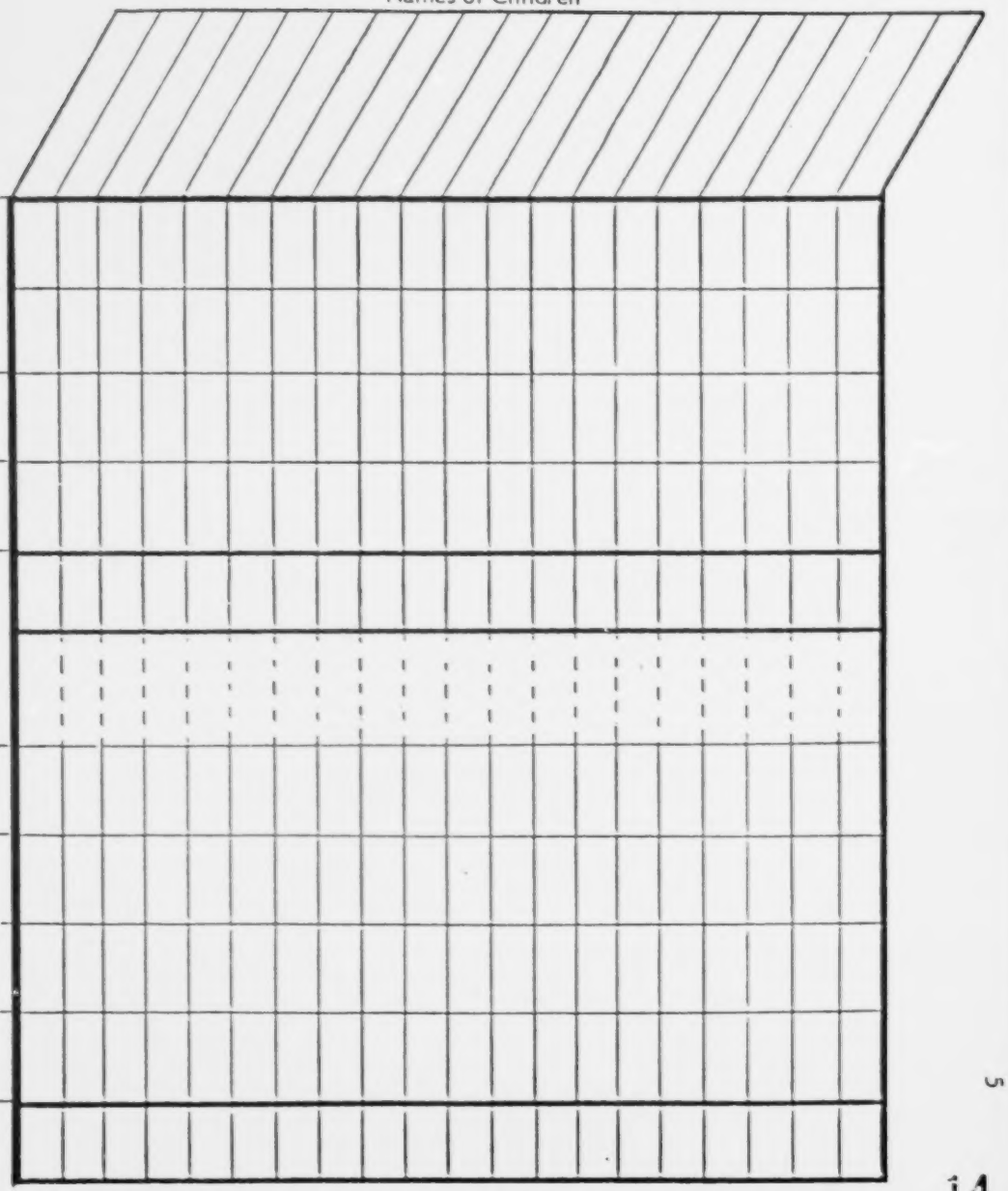
1. Works seriously on art projects and gets much satisfaction from them.
2. Experiments with different art materials and uses them in original ways, or produces art work which is very original.
3. Has advanced skills in using art materials and does art work which is exceptional in composition (balance, unity, use of space), design, color.
4. Shows a very strong interest in and remembers in great detail what she or he has seen.

subtotal

Screening for Talented Children
Teacher Checklist

CODE
1. Rarely
2. Sometimes
3. Often
4. Almost Always

Names of Children



MUSIC

1. Can tell if songs and rhythms are the same or different.
2. Uses music in original ways by experimenting with different ways of producing musical rhythms or sounds; creates music which is original and has a distinctive style.
3. Easily repeats short rhythms heard (e.g., can repeat hand-clapping patterns); sings in tune or very nearly in tune (e.g., when she or he hears a familiar song, she or he can sing it back on pitch.
4. Has a long attention span for music and seeks out opportunities to hear and create music; is sensitive to the mood, rhythm, or character of music (e.g., responds through body movements to changes in the tempo of the music).

subtotal

READING

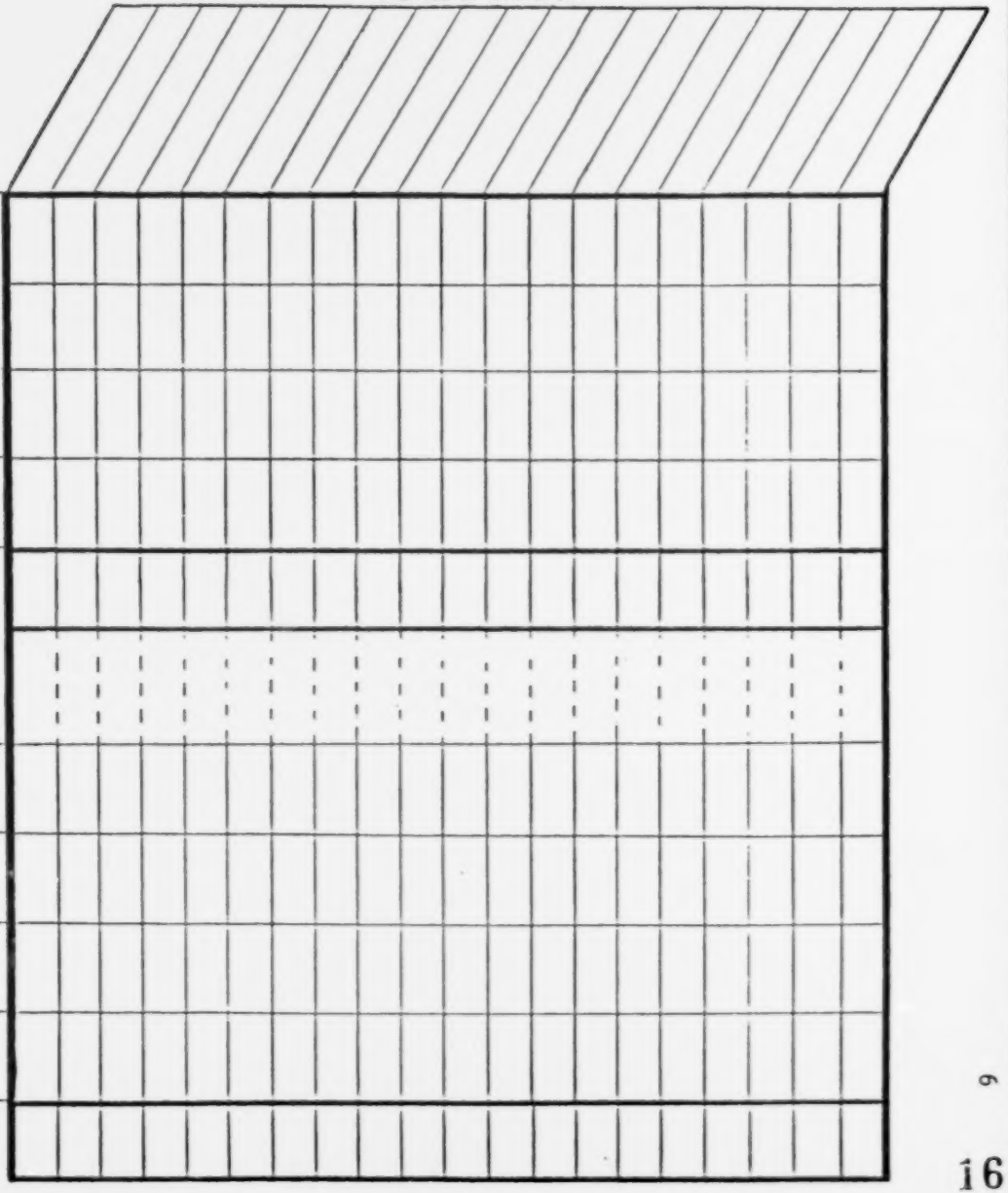
1. Easily remembers symbols, letters, word, and can read simple words, names, signs, etc.
2. Has a long attention span for reading activities, especially such activities as learning about letters and listening to stories.
3. Has a large vocabulary (i.e., knows a lot of words) and uses longer sentences than other children his or her age.
4. Understands and remembers what has been read to him or her.

subtotal

Screening for Talented Children
Teacher Checklist

CODE
1. Rarely
2. Sometimes
3. Often
4. Almost Always

Names of Children



MATH

1. Has advanced understanding of mathematical relationships (e.g., sets, number, one-to-one correspondence).
2. Shows strong interest in math activities, such as counting, measuring, weighing, ordering objects, and advanced understanding of concepts related to time (clock, calendar) or money.
3. Can do simple addition or subtraction easily and often applies math skills to activities and projects other than math.
4. Understands and remembers mathematical symbols (e.g., numerals, operation signs such as +, -, x, or ÷).

subtotal

SCIENCE

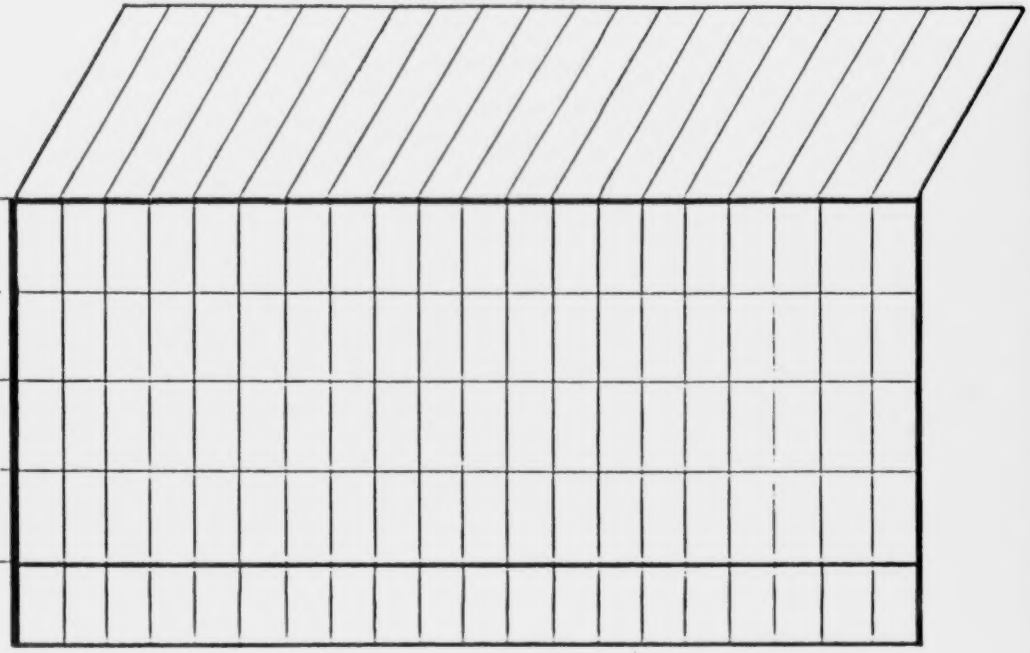
1. Examines objects carefully or observes events closely and often asks about how things work.
2. Demonstrates an early understanding of abstract concepts (e.g., gravity, energy, and evaporation) and of cause-effect (e.g., plants need water to grow, freezing, boiling, etc.).
3. Shows interest or exceptional skill in classifying and sorting.
4. Understands and remembers mathematical symbols (e.g., numerals, operation signs such as +, -, x, or ÷).

subtotal

Screening for Talented Children
Teacher Checklist

CODE
1. Rarely
2. Sometimes
3. Often
4. Almost Always

Names of Children



PSYCHOMOTOR

1. Shows outstanding ability in combining already learned motor skills (e.g., can combine running and jumping).
2. Demonstrates a wide range of movement (i.e., is especially agile and flexible).
3. Shows advanced coordination and extremely good balance while performing motor tasks.
4. Is especially physically fit, has long endurance, and is very strong for his or her age.

subtotal

PARENT CHECKLIST

PARENT CHECKLIST

This checklist is designed to gather information from parents about each child's abilities and interests. The talent areas are listed in the same order in this checklist as they are in the Teacher Checklist and on the Talent Identification Summary.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give a copy of the questionnaire to each child's parent(s) to be completed and returned as soon as possible.

2. Score each talent area (group of four items) by adding the ratings in each column, then totaling the sums. When you have scored all talent areas, you will have nine talent area scores.

3. Record each talent area score from the checklist onto the Talent Identification Summary within the appropriate talent area below the child's name. Be sure to record the scores in the column designated "P" for Parent Checklist.

Dear Parents:

We are presently involved in a training project called BOHST (Bringing Out Head Start Talents) from the University of Illinois. The purpose of this project is to train teachers in selecting and working with children who show talent or potential talent in one or more of the following six areas: intellectual, creative, leadership, visual and performing arts (art and music), academic (reading, math, science), and psychomotor.

The BOHST Project's approach is to nurture the talents of identified children by providing them with special programming to meet their unique needs. Through the BOHST training, creativity and problem solving is encouraged in all the children, and each child's individual strengths are emphasized. However, only a small percentage of children will be identified as potentially talented and will be programmed for accordingly.

Your child is being screened for this program. We would like more specific information about your child's interests and abilities. Because you know your child best, please fill out the attached parent checklist and return it as soon as possible.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Parent Checklist

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather specific information about your child's abilities and interests. Please complete the information below and the following checklist. Return it to your child's teacher as soon as possible.

Your Name _____

Your Child's Name _____

Date _____

For each item below, please circle the number in the column which best indicates how frequently you feel your child shows the following behaviors.

	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	ALMOST ALWAYS	
1. Communicates and expresses ideas very well.	1	2	3	4	
2. Is able to understand abstract or implied relationships (e.g., usually gets more out of a story, film, conversation, etc., than others his or her age).	1	2	3	4	
3. Is very good at solving problems and at applying what she or he has learned to everyday situations.	1	2	3	4	
4. Learns easily and quickly with good memory skills; tends to know about things of which other children are unaware.	1	2	3	4	
TOTAL I (for teachers' use only)					

	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	ALMOST ALWAYS	
1. Often has many ideas or solutions to problems for a given situation.	1	2	3	4	
2. Elaborates or adds detail to art work, play or conversation.	1	2	3	4	
3. Is highly imaginative in art work, play, use of materials, or ideas; and often gives unusual responses.	1	2	3	4	
4. Is flexible (i.e., able to approach a problem or use materials in more than one way).	1	2	3	4	
TOTAL II (for teachers' use only)					
1. Adjusts quickly to new situations and interacts easily with other children and adults.	1	2	3	4	
2. Tends to direct activities in which she or he is involved and assumes responsibility beyond what is expected for his or her age.	1	2	3	4	
3. Is often chosen or sought out by other children as a playmate.	1	2	3	4	
4. Shows a unique awareness of the needs of others (e.g., other children often come to him or her for help).	1	2	3	4	
TOTAL III (for teachers' use only)					

	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	ALMOST ALWAYS	
1. Works seriously on art projects and gets much satisfaction from them.	1	2	3	4	
2. Experiments with different art materials and uses them in original ways, or produces art work which is very original.	1	2	3	4	
3. Has advanced skills in using art materials and does art work which is exceptional in composition (balance, unity, use of space), design, color.	1	2	3	4	
4. Shows a very strong interest in and remembers in great detail what she or he has seen.	1	2	3	4	
TOTAL IV (for teachers' use only)					
1. Can tell if songs and rhythms are the same or different.	1	2	3	4	
2. Uses music in original ways by experimenting with different ways of producing musical rhythms or sounds; creates music which is original and has a distinctive style.	1	2	3	4	
3. Easily repeats short rhythms heard (e.g., can repeat hand-clapping patterns); sings in tune or very nearly in tune (e.g., when she or he hears a familiar song she or he can sing it back on pitch).	1	2	3	4	
4. Has a long attention span for music and seeks out opportunities to hear and create music; is sensitive to the mood, rhythm, or character of music (e.g., responds through body movements to changes in the tempo of the music).	1	2	3	4	
TOTAL V (for teachers' use only)					

	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	ALMOST ALWAYS	
1. Easily remembers symbols, letters, words, and can read simple words, names, signs, etc.	1	2	3	4	
2. Has a long attention span for reading activities, especially such activities as learning about letters and listening to stories.	1	2	3	4	
3. Has a large vocabulary (i.e., knows a lot of words) and uses longer sentences than other children his or her age.	1	2	3	4	
4. Understands and remembers what has been read to him or her.	1	2	3	4	
TOTAL VI (for teachers' use only)					
1. Has advanced understanding of mathematical relationships (e.g., sets, number, one-to-one correspondence).	1	2	3	4	
2. Shows strong interest in math activities, such as counting, measuring, weighing, ordering objects, and advanced understanding of concepts related to time (clock, calendar) or money.	1	2	3	4	
3. Can do simple addition or subtraction easily and often applies math skills to activities and projects other than math.	1	2	3	4	
4. Understands and remembers mathematical symbols (e.g., numerals, operation signs such as +, -, x, or ÷).	1	2	3	4	
TOTAL VII (for teachers' use only)					

	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	ALMOST ALWAYS	
1. Examines objects carefully or observes events closely and often asks about how things work.	1	2	3	4	
2. Demonstrates an early understanding of abstract concepts (e.g., plants need water to grow, freezing, boiling, etc.).	1	2	3	4	
3. Shows interest or exceptional skill in classifying and sorting.	1	2	3	4	
4. Has a long attention span for science activities; is highly alert to and remembers scientific facts and details well.	1	2	3	4	
TOTAL VIII (for teachers' use only)					
1. Shows outstanding ability in combining already learned motor skills (e.g., can combine running and jumping).	1	2	3	4	
2. Demonstrates a wide range of movement (i.e., is especially agile and flexible).	1	2	3	4	
3. Shows advanced coordination and extremely good balance while performing motor tasks.	1	2	3	4	
4. Is especially physically fit, has long endurance, and is very strong for his or her age.	1	2	3	4	
TOTAL IX (for teachers' use only)					

TALENT IDENTIFICATION SUMMARY

BOHST
Talent Identification Summary

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. In the spaces provided, write the name, birthdate, and gender of each child.

2. Record the total talent area scores from both the Parent Checklist (labeled "P") and the Teacher Checklist (labeled "T") in the appropriate column below each talent area. The talent areas appear in the same order on the Parent Checklist, the Teacher Checklist, and the Talent Identification Summary.

3. Total the Parent and Teacher scores for each talent area and record in the box provided.

4. Circle any total score which is equal to or above the cut-off score of 24 and write these potential talent areas in the space provided in the right-hand column. The children with one or more potential talent areas will be discussed at the Talent Staffing to determine who will be identified for BOHST programming.

TALENT IDENTIFICATION SUMMARY

Teacher _____

School _____

City, State _____

Cut-Off Score		Intellectual I 24	Creative II 24	Leadership III 24	Art IV 24	Music V 24	Reading VI 24	Math VII 24	Science VIII 24	Psychomotor IX 24	Potential Talent Area(s)
Child's Name _____ Birthdate _____ Gender _____	P										
	T										
	TOT										
Child's Name _____ Birthdate _____ Gender _____	P										
	T										
	TOT										
Child's Name _____ Birthdate _____ Gender _____	P										
	T										
	TOT										
Child's Name _____ Birthdate _____ Gender _____	P										
	T										
	TOT										
Child's Name _____ Birthdate _____ Gender _____	P										
	T										
	TOT										
Child's Name _____ Birthdate _____ Gender _____	P										
	T										
	TOT										
Child's Name _____ Birthdate _____ Gender _____	P										
	T										
	TOT										

P = Parent T = Teacher TOT = Total

TALENT STAFFING

BOHST
Talent Staffing

Purpose

The purpose of the talent staffing is to review and finalize identification of the potentially gifted or talented children. These children are those who will receive talent programming during the latter part of the year. Giftedness is difficult to determine at any age, but especially at the preschool level before children have had the opportunity to develop and demonstrate their talents. Thus, a careful review of the strengths of each child who scored at or above the cut-off on the Talent Identification Summary will increase the accuracy of the identification process. Furthermore, because teachers and parents are likely to apply the ratings differently, it is important to look at the scores as a whole and discuss major discrepencies. Thus the Talent Staffing can help assure that no child's potential is overlooked or overrated.

Who Should Be Included?

The Talent Staffing team should include the classroom teacher, the aide or assistant, and the BOHST trainer. In addition, any auxillary staff who are well acquainted with the children such as a speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, social worker, or psychologist should be included. A child's parents may also be invited. Prior to the staffing the BOHST trainer should observe the children who will be reviewed and take special note of any characteristics exhibited which may indicate talent. In addition, each team member should receive a copy of the Talent Identification Summary to review beforehand.

Which Children Are Eligible?

The children to be reviewed at the staffing are those whose score equals or exceeds the cut-off of 24 in one or more talent areas. If the child passes the cut-off in more than one talent area, only the top one or two areas need to be reviewed. It is unlikely that all the children reviewed at the staffing will go on to be identified as potentially gifted or talented and thus be eligible for talent programming. Overall, approximately 10-20% of the class should be identified as potentially gifted or talented; however, there is a wide variation in the percentages of children identified at individual sites. If there is doubt about whether or not a child is truly talented, it is better to "cast a wide net." Over identifying children is preferable to taking the risk of neglecting a child's potential. Regardless of whether a child is later defined as gifted or talented, she or he will have received the benefit of developing an area of strength.

What are the Criteria?

In reviewing each eligible child's potential talent area(s), four sets of criteria should be considered. The following questions address those criteria and can be used as guidelines for discussion.

1. Does the child exhibit many of the characteristics commonly attributed to children who are gifted or talented in that area?

Refer to the handout, Common Characteristics of Children with Talent. Children with potential talent will exhibit many of these characteristics; however, no child will fit all the descriptions.

2. Is the child significantly superior to his classmates or peers in that talent area?

   Does the child "shine" in that area? Is s/he especially interested in and good at activities in that area? Discuss the child's skill compared with other children of the same of age. Keep in mind that developmental levels expected of a three-year-old are quite different from those expected of a five-year-old.

3. Do the ratings on the Parent Checklist and the Teacher Checklist generally seem accurate?

   Review the child's ratings to ascertain whether the scores appear to be generally too high or too low. You may want to reassess a talent area by completing the cheklist again or by asking another person to complete the checklist and compare the scores. Also keep in mind that because parents often have no standard in which to compare their child, they may significantly overrate or underrate their child's abilities. Thus, wide discrepencies between parent and teacher scores need to be reviewed.

4. Does the additional information provided by other team members seem to verify the child's talent potential?

   Valuable information can be gained by observing a child in other settings or from different perspectives. Behaviors not generally exhibited in the classroom may appear during one-to-one sessions with the speech and language therapist or in the more familiar home setting. Thus, data gathered from other team members can help provide a more well-rounded picture of a child's potential.

After these questions have been discussed, it is up to the team to make a final determination of which children will be identified as potentially gifted or talented. These are the children who will be eligible for the next step in the BOHST process, Talent Programming. The identified children and their talent area(s) should be noted on the Talent Identification Summary.